

The Bath Comedy

By AGNES and EGERTON CASTLE

Authors of "The Pride of Jennie"

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"Look out a bean, nay, two or three, 'tis safer! Talk discreetly with them in the pump room, let them fan you at the ball, let them meet you in Orange Grove. Or, if you have not spirit enough, start but an imaginary one, merely for the use of your lord and master. I wager you he will rise to the fly."

She pushed Lady Standish before her as she spoke, herself rang the call bell for the firewoman and gave a few pregnant suggestions to that worthy, who advanced all sour smiles and disapproving dips. Then she strolled back into the drawing room and paused a moment as she tipped on her long gloves. Next she drew a letter from her pocket and began to read it with a thoughtful frown.

"No, no, Sir Jasper," she said half aloud. "You're a fine gentleman and a pretty fellow, you have a neat leg and an eloquent turn of speech, but I will not have the child's heart broken for the amusement of an idle day."

She took the letter between such little forefinger and thumb as if to tear it, thought better of it, folded it again and thrust it back into its place of concealment.

Presently she smiled to herself, and walked out of the long open window across the little strip of garden, and so through the iron gate into the shady back street.

CHAPTER II.

SIR JASPER STANDISH halted on the flags of the royal crescent in front of his own door and his face darkened.

He took a pinch of snuff.

"Now, I shall find my lady in tears. What a strange world it is! The girl you woo is as merry as a May day; the wife you wed is like aught but early November—equinoctial gales and water enough to drown the best spirits that ever were stilled. 'Tis a damp life!"

said Sir Jasper, "and a depressing."

He signalled as the door was thrown open by the footman and crossed the hall into the morning room, where he had left his lady weeping. He beheld a flowered bracelet, a very shapely back and a crisp powdered head outlined against the window and thought he had come upon a visitor unwares.

"I crave thee thousand pardons," quoth he, and swept from his gallant head his knowing three cornered hat. But slowly the figure at the window turned and he saw his wife's eyes strangely brilliant over two pink cheeks, beneath the snow of her up piled hair.

"Julia!" said he in amaze, and stared and stared again. "And did I doubt my own taste?" thought he to himself. "Why, she is the prettiest woman in Bath!"

"Expecting visitors, Julia?" He smiled as he spoke. In another minute that arm, shining pearl-like from the hanging lace of her sleeve, would be round his neck, and those lips (how red they were, and what a curve!) would be upon his. Well, a loving woman had her uses.

"No," said Lady Standish to his query. She dropped the word with a faintly scornful smile, and a dimple came and went at the corner of her lip. There was a patch just above the dimple. Then she turned away and looked forth into the still, solemn, gray and green crescent as before.

Sir Jasper stood bewildered. Then he put his hat upon a table and came up to his wife and placed his arm round her waist.

He glanced down at the tapping shoe, its little pointing toe and curving heel. 'Twas a smart shoe, and bonsted a diamond buckle in a knot of rose colored ribbon.

Sir Jasper took her hand.

"It wants," said he, "full half an hour to dinner time, love. Nay, do not draw your hand away. You are vexed with me? I left you weeping. 'Twas unkind."

"Weeping?" said Julia, and her heart fluttered to her throat so that she could hardly speak, and Kitty's maxims kept dancing before her eyes as if written in letters of fire. "Make him jealous—oh, if you make him jealous you will win the rubber yet!"

"If I wept," said she, "must my tears have been for you?"

"How now?" said Sir Jasper, and dropped the little hand that struggled so gently yet determinedly to be free.

Lady Standish trilled the bar of a song and directed her attention to the view of the crescent outside.

"Julia," said her husband in a deep voice.

"Sir?" she said, and tilted her little head.

"Who then were your tears for if they were not for me? What signify these manners? What do these insinuations mean? By Jupiter, I will have the truth!" His face flushed, the veins on his temples swelled, his nostrils became dilated.

"I would rather," she said, and her voice shook. "I would rather you did not question me, Sir Jasper." Then she flashed upon him in anger, swift and lovely as he had never seen her flash before. "You go your own way free enough," she said. "These last three weeks you have not spent one evening in my company, and half your days are given to others of whom I know nothing. Oh, I am not complaining, sir! I did complain, but that is over. I was wrong, for I see adversity have their advantages." Here she smiled. Had the man but known how near she was to tears! "Your neglect leaves me free."

"Free?" cried Sir Jasper, and choked. He broke out with a fearful oath and almost leaped upon her.

Passing along the railings opposite the crescent, not twelve yards distant, a tall, slender young gentleman of attractive appearance, though very dark in complexion, caught sight of her lovely, glowing face, stared first in unconscious admiration, then with recognition and finally, blushing, swarthy, saluted with some appearance of agitation. Lady Standish, aware that her husband had approached close behind her and hearing in every creak of his satin coat the flattering emotion of his senses, felt herself driven more and more by the unknown demon of mischief that had taken possession of her. She fluttered her little handkerchief back at the young gentleman with a gesture that almost indicated the wafting of a kiss.

"Death and damnation!" cried Sir Jasper. "Before my very eyes!"

He seized her by the wrist and flung her down upon the settee. "Nay," he cried, "there may be husbands that would put up with this, but I am not of them! So that is the comfort! That is the bean for whom you pink your self with such fine feathers, whom you lie in wait for at the window to make signals to and smirk at! Oh, my innocent country daisy! Fudge! I might have known you were too fond—hypocrite!" He dashed at the window and burst its fastenings.

"Hey, you, you, my Lord Verney! A word with you!" Sir Jasper was already foaming at the mouth.

The slim gentleman paused, surprised.

"Oh, heavens!" cried Lady Standish. "What have I done? Sir Jasper! My husband!" She threw herself upon him.

"Let me go, madam!" He thrust her aside and, bareheaded, dashed down the stairs and out of the house toward Lord Verney, who, with a bashful yet a pleasant smile, began to retrace his steps.

"'Tis a fair day, Sir Jasper," said he courteously and then became aware of Sir Jasper's convulsed face and noted that Lady Standish, whom but a moment before he had beheld all smiling beauty, now clung despairingly to the window post, her countenance ghastly behind her rouge. Lord Verney was a shy young man.

"Stand—stand, Lord Verney. Lord Verney, a word with you!"

The youth stopped, wheeled round, and "I am at your service," said he. A certain pallor had replaced the ingenious young blushes upon his cheek, but into his eye there sprang a fine spark of spirit.

Sir Jasper marched upon him and only halted when his six feet of slinky bulk were within a yard of the strapping willowy shape. His hot red brown eyes shot fire and fury, death and annihilation upon the innocent young peer. His full lips endeavored to sneer, but rage distorted them to a grimace, through which his white teeth shone forth ferociously.

"Come, come, we understand each other," said he. "Will you walk with me? There is no time like the present, and a couple of friends are easy to come by."

"'Tis vastly well," said Lord Verney, with an attempt at dignity that betrayed the boy in every line of him. Then all at once color flushed into his face again, and his rigid demeanor was broken up. "Come, direct take it all, Sir Jasper," said he, "and what is it about?"

Sir Jasper threw bloodshot eyes upward.

"This fellow," quoth he, appealing to heaven, "oh, this pretty fellow! You want reasons, my Lord Verney?"

Lord Verney blushed and stammered. He'd like to know what he had done. He was at Sir Jasper's disposition, of course, but before drawing swords on a man—Sir Jasper uttered a sound which was between a groan and a roar. He indicated with sweeping gesture the figure of Lady Standish.

"Oh, Mistress Belairs," ejaculated her friend, with a wail. "'Tis indeed terrible. Think of Sir Jasper's danger, and all because of my folly in listening to your poisonous advice!"

"Come, come," cried Mistress Belairs, heedless of the presence of footmen with tapers and lady's maid with twinkling curl paper. "Sit up this minute, Julia, and tell me the whole from the beginning. It is no use your trying to extenuate, for I will know all that has happened."

(To Be Continued.)



"I know," I tell you! Let that suffice," she strained in anguish, watching, clinging still to the window post. Then he hissed:

"I know!"

"Sir Jasper!"

"I know, I tell you!" repeated Sir Jasper. "Let that suffice." Here she smiled. Had the man but known how near she was to tears! "Your neglect leaves me free."

take! Do you mean, sir—am I to understand, Sir Jasper—'Tis monstrous!" White dismay and crimson confusion chased each other across his candid brow. "Surely you do not mean me to understand that Lady Standish has any connection with this extraordinary scene?"

Sir Jasper's trembling hand was furtively uplifted, then blindly sought his sword hilt and then dropped in impotent disgust at his side.

"My lord," said he, "Lady Standish is the pearl of womanhood. I would have you know it! There never breathed a female more virtuously attached to her husband and her duty—I would have you know it!" His face was quite horrible to look at in its withering sarcasm. "My quarrel with you, sir, is—"

He paused and cast a roving eye upon the young gentleman, who now began to show unequivocal signs of fear. A jealous husband, a confidante that lady have to be me, any day—but a reviling manner!

"'Tis the shape of your leg that mispleases me, sir. You have a vile calf! I cannot endure that so offensive an outline should pass and repay my windows."

"I understand, Sir Jasper; yes, yes," said Lord Verney soothingly, backing as he spoke and casting nervous eyes round the empty street. "And so good morning."

"Rat!" cried Sir Jasper, and shot forth a clutching hand.

"I will bear it in mind," cried Lord Verney. "Good morning, good morning!"

He was fleeing away on a swift foot. "Rat! Rat!" screamed the enraged baronet, starting in pursuit. But his passion made him clumsy. He stumbled, lurched, struck his foot against a stone, fell upon his knee and rose in another mood; one of darkness, sullen determination for revenge.

Lord Verney was a timid young man. As the day grew, however, he began to have a curious recollection of Lady Standish's lovely smiling greeting and of that little gesture with the white handkerchief, which had almost seemed like the blowing of a kiss (here his very ears would grow hot, then of Sir Jasper's inexplicable wrath, and of the stricken figure by the window! Could it be? 'Twas impossible! When the dusk fell he made up his mind and sought the counsel of that fashionable friend who was kind enough to pilot his inexperience through the first shoals and rocks of Bath life. This gentleman's name was Spicer. He called himself captain; of what regiment no one knew.

CHAPTER III.

SIR JASPER came striding back to the house. In the morning room he passed his wife with out a word.

Ten minutes later he sallied forth again. She heard his steps ring out; they sounded very desperate. She sat on the pink striped settee for a misery too deep this time for tears. How puerile, how far away, seemed the morning's storm! She sat with her hands locked and her eyes starting revolving terrible possibilities and the less plans for preventing them. "Dinner was served in vain. Her ladyship's woman brought her a dish of tea. This poor Julia drank, for she felt faint and weary. Then a sudden thought struck her.

"'Tis Mistress Belairs who made the mischief," she thought; "now she must mend it." She dashed off a despairing note to the lady and dispatched her black page with all possible celerity.

I have followed your advice—ran the quivering lines—to my undoing. You told me to make Sir Jasper jealous; I tried to make him jealous and succeeded far too well. He fancies there is something between me and Lord Verney. Poor young man, I have spoken to him but three times in my life! There will be a duel, and they will both be killed. Come to me, dear Mistress Belairs, and see what is to be done, for I am half dead with fear and anguish.

The dusk was falling when, with incredible celerity, the sedan chair of Mistress Belairs rounded the corner at a swinging pace. Her bell-like voice might be heard from within rattling the chairmen with no gentle tone or their singleness.

In a storm she burst open the door, a whirlwind tore through the passage. Lady Standish's obsequious footmen she flounced upon one side. Into that afflicted lady's presence she burst with undiminished vigor.

"So," said she. "These are fine goings on! And why Lord Verney, may I inquire?"

"Oh, Mistress Belairs," ejaculated her friend, with a wail. "'Tis indeed terrible. Think of Sir Jasper's danger, and all because of my folly in listening to your poisonous advice!"

"Come, come," cried Mistress Belairs, heedless of the presence of footmen with tapers and lady's maid with twinkling curl paper. "Sit up this minute, Julia, and tell me the whole from the beginning. It is no use your trying to extenuate, for I will know all that has happened."

(To Be Continued.)

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But Protection System Must be Maintained.

Republican Campaign Text Book Issued—Party Record in the Platform This Year.

"HOME CAKE IN THE PANTRY"

Washington, D. C., Sept. 10.—The Republican party's achievements for half a century and particularly its record in the present congress, is commended to the voters in a campaign text book out today by the Republican congressional committee.

The book contains 273 pages, and is replete with Republican doctrine, embracing practically every subject upon which information may be desired. Radicalism or conservatism, it declares, are never matters of concern to Republicans. As they are content with practical and progressive deals and the maturing of those deals into positive performance.

Every statement made and all figures printed are declared in the foreword of the book to be official or authoritative. The book calls attention to the fact that since 1885 the house of representatives has been Republican and adds "there is every reason to expect that a substantial working Republican majority will be elected next November."

Only Democratic success, it is declared, can prevent the giving to the people of the country a new record in every phase of our industrial life.

A list of 23 instances of important Republican legislation follows, beginning with the homestead law, signed by Lincoln. Then follow extracts from speeches, remarks and messages of President Roosevelt on various matters, various statistics, and the railway rate law in full.

The keynote of tariff question is sounded in the following statement: "The protectionists do not claim he schedules are sacred and are never to be altered. They do claim, however, that the so-called American system of protection, as exemplified by the Dingley law, for nine years, sacred and must be maintained."

After quoting the letter of President Roosevelt dated August 18, to Watson, analyzing the issues of the coming campaign, the book closes with a quotation from Speaker Cannon's new platform: "Put none but one cake in the pantry."

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In its search for sensational novelities the Barnum & Bailey circus management seems to have surpassed all previous records this year. Instead of one "thriller" of an ultra-sensational character, several are announced, in addition to what is declared to be the best all-round circus that this big arena organization has ever offered the American public. One of the newest sensations—and one that seems to have created a great deal of interest in other cities where the big show has been seen this season—is known as the "Two Twists of Terror."

A description of the two climaxes in this startling act disclose some unusually interesting features. After performing a number of novel and unusual exploits upon their wheels, one of the Boile Brothers, the daring bicyclist who perform the "twists," takes his station, mounted on a wheel, on a small platform at the higher end of a runway. When the signal is given, the rider and the higher end of a runway. When into the air, turn a complete aerial somersault; land on a second runway, and go speeding down to the ground. This, however, is not all. The other brother takes a position, mounted, at the end of a teeter-board, thus depressing it. The first rider ascends to the apex of a high pedestal, placed over the other end of the see-saw. When all is ready rider and bicycle drop with terrific force upon the near end of the teeter-board, sending the other bicyclist flying into the air. The latter also turns a somersault and, landing safely, speeds down the track. Both exploits are sensational in the extreme, and the furore they create is tremendous.

The Art of Handling Men.

Business men often fail because they do not know how to handle men. They can do their own work all right, but they are failures when it comes to directing others. They lack tact, diplomacy.

Many men antagonize others; they lack patience, lose temper, fly to pieces over little things. And no man is a good leader who cannot control himself.

A great many business men seem to think that it takes a deal of driving, scolding, fault finding to get the best out of others. It is, however, just the opposite. Employees never give up their best in response to forcing methods.

I know a young man who promises to be a leader in his line who is as quiet and gentlemanly in his methods as a modest woman. He never raises his voice, never gets angry. When an employee needs correcting, instead of scolding or nagging, he sits right down and shows him or her just how to do the thing. He tries to help them out of their difficulty, not to confuse them. He does not need to scold, because everybody respects him, admires him, and knows he is always trying to do the fair thing, to give a square deal, that he wants only what is just and right, and there is nothing arbitrary in his methods.

The result is, he does not need to storm around his establishment and use abusive, profane language. He knows there is a stronger force, a better way than that. The result is that he has perfect discipline.

Not one would think of taking advantage of him or try to deceive him, because he is so kind, square, true.

I know another man in business nearby who adopts just the opposite method. He storms and swears, scolds, nags, goes through his establishment like a bull through a china shop, making everybody feel mean and disagreeable. Nobody respects him. He rules by brute force, keeping everybody cowed and afraid of him. They obey him and let him impose upon them in order to avoid a scene, or for fear they will lose their positions. If an office boy or stenographer makes a little mistake he will go all to pieces, fly into a rage, and make it very uncomfortable for everybody about him.

People waiting in the outer office often hear loud talking and most abusive language in his private office. But he is not nearly as successful as his quiet, unobtrusive neighbor.

He never thinks of recognizing one of his employees on the street.

The other man always lifts his hat to the humblest girl in his employ, and has a pleasant smile for everybody, because he feels an interest in everybody and they all love him.—Success.

Yellow Journal English.

One of the New York Sun's bright young men, noting the frequency with which certain words appear in sensational newspapers, has compiled the following helpful glossary:

Bandit—Any person guilty of crime against property for which the penalty is more than ten days in jail.

Boudoir—Any bedroom the rent of which is more than \$1.50 a week.

Burly—Adjective always applied to a male negro.

College Girl—Any woman who has ever gone to school.

Deal—Any business transaction.

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Globe Trotter—Any one who has been to Hokokus, New Jersey, Kittery, Maine, or Peru, Indiana.

Have—Good word to use almost anywhere.

High—Adjective which must be prefixed to noun "noon" in the account of a fashionable wedding.

Hurtle—Verb describing motion of any falling object, especially a brick or a suicide.

Juggle—What is always done with the funds of a bank or trust company.

Prominent—Descriptive adjective applied to farmers, plumbers and dentists.

Raffles—any thief who wears a collar.

Slay—Synonymous with obsolete verb "kill."

Trust—Any money not owned by the proprietor.

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